

T H E

Batchelor Keeper:

*Batchelor Keeper*

R O R, T H E

Effects of a FRIEND.

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L O N D O N:

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Batchelor Kipper:

OF THE

FRIGS OF A FRIEND

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L O N D O N

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## Batchelor Keeper.

HE Pleasantness of a Summers Evening invited me  
 into the Fields, and my Love of Solitude made me  
 chuse the most lonely Walks. As my Mind was  
 seriously engag'd in a deep Meditation, I was hastily  
 surpriz'd with a familiar Salute from a Gentleman, I  
 could not presently call by Name, tho' we had been intimately  
 acquainted many Years, and our daily Correspondence not long  
 since interrupted; yet the Suddenness of the Accident, the Un-  
 likelyhood of meeting him there, and the great Alteration of a  
 few Months had made in his Face and Mein, gave such a Check  
 to my Memory, that I could not immediately recollect him: But  
 I remain'd not long in this Labyrinth before his Information,  
 joyn'd with an hearty Embrace, afforded my Remembrance the  
 Clue, that readily conducted me to the Knowledge of him. My  
 Joy to see him was nor greater than my Wonder at his Metamor-  
 phosis. The Freedom of his Air, and the Chearfulness of his  
 Countenance were overwhelm'd with a Cloud of Melancholy.  
 My Friendship, more than Curiosity, made me inquisitive to  
 know the Cause of that Sorrow, to which this apparent Change  
 was owing. The deep fetch'd Sighs which follow'd my Requests,  
 pierc'd my very Heart; and the Show'rs of Tears that trickl'd  
 from his aged Eyes, melted me into a Sympathy; but these  
 dismal Fore-runners at length made Way for the following  
 Relation.

A 2 You



"You know, *Philaretus* (said he) with what indefatigable Industry, Labours and Pains, I have acquir'd a decent Competency and what Methods of Frugality and Carefulness I have taken to preserve it. You are sensible of the Hopes I had, which sweeten'd all my Toil, and made even the Fatigue of Business fit easy on me, but they are all blasted now, and the sad Disappointment makes me lament my insignificant Assiduity. You, *Philaretus*, are happy, who feel not the Weight of a Child's Miscarriage, and are not capable of a Parent's Grief. — My Son, my only Son, my once (say, to my Shame, my still) beloved Son, is posting on to Ruin. His Mother's purblind Fondness conniving at his juvenile Follies, and, lavishly supplying his wanton Prodigality, has excited his vicious Inclination to ascend gradually from the Slips of Youth to the Summit of Debauchery. Scarce a Day passing that my Ears a'n't alarm'd with some unlucky News of his Extravagance. For some Time I held my Liberality under a strict Rein, and his Mother's too late Repentance for her former Weakness, fix'd her in a Resolution to withstand his wheedling Intreaties: But these Cautions prov'd so fruitless, that, instead of stopping his Career, they were a Spur to his Insolence, and turn'd his artful Civility into downright ill Language, and haughty Behaviour; and what with undutiful Speeches, and clam'rous Threats, he has so wrought upon her tender Fears, that she was oblig'd to continue her private and large Supplies by Way of Prevention. I then laid aside these abortive Means, and would have purchas'd his Duty at the Price of my Bounty, patiently expecting his Gratitude would be proportion'd to my Excess of Favour. I had indeed somewhat more of his Company, but generally bought it at a dear Rate. I propos'd to him an unexceptionable Match, and made him such Promises on his Marriage, as would have given most Fathers Reason to censure my Prudence; or, in case he had any Objection to this Offer, I assur'd him of my free Consent to his own Choice. His Silence a while kept me in a painful Suspense, and my ill grounded Conjectures laid the Cause on his Modesty, which I sought to embolden by repeated Protestations of performing the Engagements my fatherly Affection had brought me under: My Condescension gave him  
the



the Impudence to answer my Indulgence with a Hasty and lewd Satire upon Matrimony, and it was no small Trouble to me to perceive by his wild Harangue, that his Disgust proceeded from an athiestical Libertinism, and not from the Motives of a virtuous Continnence. In fine, to compleat himself in all the necessary Qualifications of a modern Rake, he long since enter'd himself in Fortune's Academy, to learn the profound Mysteries of Gaming, and is so well vers'd in every Particular of it, from Bowling with his Grace to playing at Putt with a Cöbler, that the Groom Porter has deputed him to decide all the nice Questions belonging to Play. He cogs a Die, and slips a Card with the Dexterity of a Juggler, and can distinguish a Bite from a Bubble in the twinkling of an Eye. To this he has added the glorious Art of abominable Swearing, and often gives Proofs of his Skill in such Volleys of new coin'd Oaths, and emphatic Imprecations, that the Ignorant wonder, and the Wise tremble to hear him; there's not a Peer nor a Porter can outdo him: Nor is he less expert in the Punctilios of drinking; he baulks not his Glass till he drops from his Seat, and then he stares with a Grace, and staggers with an Air; he stammers in Tune, hiccups the Time, and belches the Chorus. If he foots it home, his Head gets the Statt of his Heels, and keeps its Distance all the Way a Yard before them; and there's not a Night in the Week but he's liable to an Indictment for robbing the Scavenger. He's a Gentleman of a very uneven Temper, sometimes he's as fierce as a Tiger, at a smart Repartee; at other Times as gentle as a Lamb at the grandest Affront. He fights like an Hero, and stabs the Villian in every Part of his Body if absent; but submits to be lugg'd by the Nose, and will stand a caning if his Adversary be present. He's very good at bilking Coaches, which he often practises for Diversion, and an hearty drubbing finishes the Test. There's hardly a Magistrate in the City from the Chain to the Laathorn, but has transgressed the Law out of respect to me, in permitting his Outrages to pass unpunish'd, and ordering him to be conducted to my Habitation, when he has justly deserv'd to be sent elsewhere with a Guard and a Mirtimus: so when I walk the Streets, I am forc'd to wear one Hand in my Pocket, and the other on my Hat,

that

that I may be ready to return the different Salutations in a proper Manner. But he has seldom the Luck to escape so well on the other Side the Gates; it is generally his Fortune to be detain'd there, as an H stage, till Satisfaction is made for the Mischief he has done in some glorious Frolick or notable Rencontre, and about Nine the next Morning a Letter is privately conveyed to his Mother, with as many Lies in the Beginning as are necessary to patch up a false and melancholy Story: in the middle as much Hypocrisy as is sufficient to procure her Belief and Pity; and at the End the Sum total requir'd for Recompence and Ransom; which in Compliance with her Correspondent's Advice, she punctually pays at Sight. And, as soon as he is let loose, he makes home, his only Care being to avoid my seeing him come in, so up he steals to his Chamber, and most expeditiously gets himself new vampt, and then comes down again in such a Manner, as bespeaks him rather willing than afraid to be heard, and he is sure to hunt in every Room, doubling and redoubling, like a Whelp that has lost the Scent, till he has thrown himself in my View, that I may suppose him just arriv'd a *Lewee*; and tho' every one in the House is, by my Wife's Directions, a Confederate in the Deceit; yet Fame, either out of good or ill Will, seldom keeps his Rogeries long from my Knowledge. His Cloaths are of the newest Cut. He wears a Sagamore's Revenue at once on his Back, and peeps thro' the Price of a Lordship. His Physician, Surgeon, and Apothecary have a settled Salary; yet he finds them so much Business, they grow sick of their Bargain, He's fat and lean by Turns; when three Months Epicurism has swell'd him to the Size of a Porpus, a Month's spitting reduces him to a Skeleton. To finish the exquisite Accomplishments of a Man in Fashion, he hath lately pitch'd upon a mercenary Strumpet to hasten his Undoing. He has taken and furnish'd her an House fit for a Countess. She sleeps upon Down, is cloath'd in Tissue, serv'd upon Plate, and stirs not abroad without her Chair.—What, *Philareus*, must be the End of all this? The Gallows, or a Prison, will infallibly be his Doom. The Reflection of his present Condemnation makes my Life a Burden, and the Thoughts of his future Destruction render the Apprehension of Death most terrible." Here

Here a new Flood of Tears drown'd his Speech, and gave an Opportunity of condoling his Misfortune. The Drops from my Eyes demonstrated the Softness of my Heart, and afforded him just Reason to believe I bore a Part in his Affliction. I consider'd that the tenderest Compassion without other Assistance was but Lip labour, and rather aggravated Sorrow, then reliev'd it: Wherefore, joyning to that the cordial Promises of my best Endeavours to reclaim the young Transgressor, the Hopes of my Success somewhat moderated his Grief. We employ'd the Remainder of our Time in contriving Methods to effect my Designs; and after many disapprov'd Projections, we, at last, came to a very promising Conclusion.

My former Familiarity with the Father occasion'd my having been frequently at his House; and consequently I cou'd not be unknown to the Son, who always express'd so much good Manners, as to pay me the Difference due to one whom his Father honour'd with a more than ordinary Esteem.

It may not be improper to inform you, that my Friend Mr. *Riebbottom* was a wealthy *Turky* Merchant, who despised the finitser and precarious Methods of stockjobbing and wagering, and all other the fraudulent Means (which sometimes are so pernicious to the Authors, and those concern'd with them in particular, and infallibly tend to the Prejudice of Traffic in general: An epidemical Distemper the Commerce of this Nation hath a long Time groan'd under, notwithstanding the wholesome Physic the Legislature have provided to cure the Malady) contented himself with the honest Rules of Trade, which he pursu'd with so strict a Probity, that the fairest Opportunity, or greatest Advantage cou'd not make him deviate from them; he bought at the best Hand, and sold at easy Rates; thereby experiencing the Benefit of quick Returns. As his punctual Payments gain'd him Repute from his Creditors, so did his patient Forbearance Applause from his Debtors. His Practice prov'd it more eligible to support than ruin an honest Insolvent. He paid his Customs with Cheerfulness and Exactness, and was as innocent of the Guilt, as free from the Punishment attendant on Concealment. He was in all respects one of those very few that ever think of the Freeman's Oath after they have



taken it, and cou'd not dispense with Perjury notwithstanding the Motive of universal Example. He did not believe Industry a Crime, nor Frugality a Vice; yet kept both within such due Bounds, that he deserv'd neither the Character of a Muckworm, or Miser: He was neither an Enemy, nor a Slave to Diversions, but knew how to enjoy and not abuse them. He wou'd sometimes raise his Spirits with a Glass, but never drown them. He liv'd as a Mean between the Prodigal and the Niggard, and could shew himself generous without being lavish. His House was provided with every Thing necessary and decent, without the gaudy Flourishes of superfluous Trifles. His Table was covered with the best Substantials, not the costliest Delicacies; and his daily Supplies were such as plainly shew'd he desired neither Want nor Waste. He was not so basely mistrustful as to be always prying into his Books and Cash; nor so negligently careless, as not sometimes to inspect both. He was always cautious of meddling with public Matters, not for Want of Judgment, but to avoid Popularity. He had a due Regard to the Grandeur of the City, but no Desire to share in the transitory Dignities belonging to it; his vigorous maintaining his Rights never run counter to the Court's Interest; but if ever they interfer'd, he rejoic'd at the Expedient that preserv'd both. No Party could claim him for their own. Providence rewarded his Thine with a vast Increase; yet was he not more eminent for his Wealth, than his Goodness; nor happier in his Possessions than his Contentment.

The Comforts he enjoy'd in a Wife were no small Addition to his Happiness. She was one of the younger Issues of a Coroner, whose Portion consist'd of more intrinsic Virtue than Sterling Specie; but, being a Stranger in the customary Ambition of a vain glorious Appearance, she confin'd her Expectations to the Limits of a decent Moderation, and thereby prov'd a better Fortune than many others with a larger Dowry. She was train'd up in a Court Education, retaining the graceful Carriage of a Woman of Quality, without any Tincture of the Pride and Vanity that is generally infused by it. She chang'd her Station without altering her Principles, and the awkward Formalities of her new Associates no more corrupted her native Nobleness, than the Lowly of the old

old one had tainted her Solidity. She became an Ornament to the City, and her bright Example so influenced the unpolish'd Beholders, that they quickly turn'd their wonted Stiffness into unaffected Gentility, which introduced a Reformation among her Acquaintance, in Spite of Nature, and Desance of Custom. She kept an admirable Medium in her Behaviour, demonstrating an inviolable Modesty without a precise Reservedness, and could be vivaciously facetious, without any Symptom of Coquetry. She knew as well how to be silent, as when 'twas convenient to speak, and tho' she employ'd more Time in Books of Devotion, than on Pieces of Poetry, and was much better read in the Precepts of Religion, than the Flights of Romances; yet her agreeable Conversation gave evident Tokens of her Wit, but not the least Sign of her being a Bigot. The Failings of her Sex were Subjects that afforded her no Diversion; she, contrary to modern Practice, took more Pains to stifle the Report of a Miscarriage, than others to proclaim it. Her honest Love to her Husband made the Duties of a Wife not only easy but pleasant; and tho' *Sarah* like, she rever'd him as her Lord, and paid a perfect Obedience to his unlimited Will, yet her prudent Conduct so wrought upon her excellent Temper, that she became his Partner in Authority. She was neither arrogant nor servile, but always esteem'd it more commendable to prevail by persuasive Reason than domineering Compulsion. Her Counsel often guided his Actions, and Success generally attended the Harmony of their Judgments. He experienc'd, her faithful Breast to be a safe Repository for his Secrets, and could confidently trust his most important Affairs in that sacred Asylum. In all Occurrences he observ'd an equal Fidelity, so that they both were as void of Fear as free from Reserve to each other. Her obliging Complaisance added to his Happiness, and her indulgent Treatment alleviated the Misfortune of an adverse Turn. She was as delightfully pleasant in her Youth, as venerably grave in her Age; yet neither wanton in the one, nor peevish in the other. In a Word, the whole Course of their Lives gave a Proof, that Piety and Discretion were the most necessary Qualifications to render this Life happy, tho' too soon, alas! are they convinc'd, that there is no Stability in Enjoyments here; the

Remembrance of all their past Beatitude being suspended by their present Affliction.

But to return.—According to Appointment, I went to my Friend's House, which discovered one of the most melancholy Scenes I had a long while met with. After we had waited above an Hour beyond the usual Time of dining, our young Gentleman came in without any Apology for his Rudeness, in giving a whole Family the Pain of Attendance: And, as soon as we had din'd, he was *sans ceremonie* making his Exit, when his Father rather intreated, than commanded him to stay; and tho' he did not refuse to comply, yet he could not conceal his Reluctance.—Set over a Bottle of Burgundy, we began to talk of Things indifferent, and foreign to the main Business; but his Father came quickly to the Point, repeating again what he told me before, and putting a Restraint upon his natural Tenderness, he acted a real Passion to the Life.

“ My Patience, *Pbilaretus*, said he, is now worn out, and I am resolv'd to bear no longer with him. In vain have I tried all the most probable Ways to prevent his Destruction, and I will not rack my Brains for new Inventions. His resty Heart will neither be conquer'd by Violence, nor won by Gentleness. I will not be beggar'd while I live, nor leave the Fruits of my Labours to be squander'd away upon Debauchery after my Death; but for the future shall indulge the Demands of my own Fancy, without consulting the Price of the Purchase. I'll make an Alms-House my Heir, and a Parish my Executor. He has his Estate in his Pocket: I'll not give him another Doit, were it to procure him a Reprieve. I have empty'd his Mother's Exchequer, so that what she before granted by Constraint, she must now deny thro' Necessity. He shall not harbour here: I'll shut him out of my Mind and House at once. What he has, his Harlot and he will quickly consume; but the Highway is a substantial Banker, and always pay Bills upon Sight. If an unlucky Hue and Cry trip up his Heels, and throw him into *Newgate*, he will not lodge there long, before he'll be conducted to the glorious Tripes; from whence, after a whining Tone, and a short Speech, he heroically leaves this World, and swings into the next, having his Name immortaliz'd



mortaliz'd by his Fellow Miscreants; for the meritorious Villany of dying hard."

Here I perceiv'd Nature had almost got the upper Hand of Art; but as he never stood in more Need of Courage, so he never sooner regain'd it. The Force of a firm Resolution resisted the Attacks of Humanity; yet I could not without Wonder observe, that the Countenance of the harden'd Profligate was steel'd with a surly Resentment, without the least Appearance of a penitent Compunction.

"It is (answer'd I) a common Misfortune, that the Generality of Youth are possess'd with a perverse Incredulity, that they will not take the most solid Truth upon Trust from their Elders, without the Conviction of a dear bought Experience, but rather entertain a Prejudice against all Advice, and are thereby prompted to conclude, that a Persuasion from the Follies and Vices their Years are liable to hath more ill Nature than Reason in it, and that it is an unjust Severity to debar them from enjoying those Pleasures they see before them. The virtuous Restrictions of Parents are look'd on as insupportable Hardships, and imagin'd to proceed only from an unreasonable Desire, that their Children should in the Spring of their Days conform themselves to those Austerities, which their Age has oblig'd them to comply with, not thro' Choice but Necessity. Conversation with others of the same Principles confirms the embraced Opinion, and Example encourages their corrupt Inclinations to an obstinate Disobedience. Having by these Means, tho' perhaps with some Strugglings at first, broke thro' the Bounds of their Duty, they arrive by Degrees to an Excess of Impiety; for Custom naturally begets Habit, and a Perseverance in Wickedness an irreclaimable Obduracy. Hence chiefly are we furnished with so many dismal Instances of lamentable Catastrophes, which always bring up the Rear of a vicious Course. Many have too late lamented their Neglect of that pious Counsel they despised when given; But the happy few, who pay an observant Allegiance to paternal Admonition, or, with the Gospel Prodigal, return betimes from their dissolute Excursions, feel the blessed Effects of it in the happy Consequences.

"I hope, that either Report has been too busy with the young Gentleman's Failings, or, that your own Aversion to Vice, and ardent Zeal for his Welfare, make you misconstrue some of his youthful Levities into more than slight Miscarriages. Your Anger, however warrantable it may seem at present, I shall rather seek to abate by proper Means, than turn into Fury by the Opposition of Persuasion: And, since you have discarded him for apprehended Faults, I shall, with a true Regard to both, endeavour a Reconciliation: But if my narrowest Inspection, and most diligent Enquiry, will not allow me to undeceive you, I intend not to part with him, till he's qualified for your Favour by a true Repentance, and thorough Reformation."

This positive Resolve was much more terrible to the Son than his Father's rigid Treatment, and it was no hard Task to read the Perplexity of his Mind in the Variety of his Looks. The Restraint he expected from me appear'd as dreadful as to be immur'd, and, had not his projected Brain supplied him with Hopes, by contriving a Way for his Escape, he could never have so much as bore the Thoughts on't.

It was not long before I took my Leave, and by the Help of an Hack, my new Charge and I got quickly to my Lodging: But, as the Coach turned the Corner of the Street where I lived, he seem'd very much surpriz'd, and his Amazement increased all the rest of the Way, till we stopp'd at the Door directed to: I led him to my Apartment; and, without any Return to the Civilities I paid him, he hastens to the Window, standing there for a while, as if he had been fixed to the Place. I spoke to him several Times, but his Confusion had stopp'd his Ears. He would now and then take a disorder'd Turn about the Room, but soon retir'd to his Post again. Tho' it was evident something particular drew him to the Sash so constantly; yet could I not, by the strictest Observation, discern what it was that had that attractive Faculty. In one of his Intervals I took Occasion to ask him how he lik'd the Lodgings? when pulling out his Watch, he answer'd me 'twas past six. My Landlord coming up to salute his new Guest, paid Abundance of Compliments, without Notice taken of any of 'em, the over Ceremoniousness of the one, and the

the Unconcernedness of the other, afforded a Scene I could not forbear smiling at. He had all this while (*inter alia*) been plotting a Device for his Enlargement, and made the specious Presence of earnest Business the Means to affect it, binding many Promises, with as many Oaths, to assure me of his speedy Return. I alledged the Engagement I had laid upon myself hindered my Consent; but, if his Affairs were so very pressing, I would bear him Company; that I found was what he neither expected nor desired, and his weak Evasions made it plain, that he could easier dispense with Omission, than admit me a Witness. My Refusal gave him the Spleen till Bedtime, maugre all my Efforts to divert his Humour.

The first Week I made but a small Progress: For, his Thoughts being fill'd with Variety of Reflections, and ruffled by different Passions, his Spirits were in a continual Fluter. He was sometimes all Flash, another while perfectly Stupid, one Minute chagrin, the next outrageous. Shame, Anger, Hope, Fear, and a Multitude of &c.'s kept their Revels in his Breast, so that it was no easy Matter to govern his unsteady Will, and stop its running into Extremes. As Occasion required, I sometimes reproved, sometimes encouraged him, being altogether as cautious of chilling his Warmth, as of increasing his Flame. When I exclaimed against his Enormities, he audaciously justified his Actions. If I touch'd upon his Extravagance, he averr'd, Avarice was much more unpardonable, the first being a Generosity of Soul, the second a base and grovelling Sordidness; and that retrenching the one was adhering to the other in equal Proportion, denying the Possibility of a Means between either. To what I called profuse Gaming, he gave the Title of genteel Diversion: where he had (he said) as fair a Chance to improve, as impair his Fortune: And therefore it did not deserve the Censure I had bestowed upon it. Unnecessary Oaths he counted as trifling Sins, but allowed 'em the grand Embellishments of Discourse, and the most glorious Ornaments of modern Eloquence. The scandalous Practice of midnight Exploits he put in the Lists of youthful Frolics, which tend only to the Advancement of Mirth, and declared that the Statutes ought to be burnt which coupled a Punishment to them. He affirm'd



assur'd excessive drinking merited a Place in the Catalogue of  
 heroick Exercises, and that to pass a Glass; argu'd no less  
 Cowardice than to put up an Affront. To baulk a Bumper to  
 his Mistress's Health, he deem'd as dishonourable as to refuse  
 fighting for her. He heard me relate his Father's Threats of  
 Disinheritance with as little Concern as *Aeschylus*'s Idiot, who cared  
 for nothing, and was no more shock'd at the Denuncements of  
 future Vengeance, than *David's* Fool the Atheist. When I tax'd  
 him with the Folly of keeping a *perfidious Delilah*; he deny'd the  
 Fact, but, insatuated with the meretricious Artifices of his charm-  
 ing *Maggie*, launched out into all the Extravagancies of an hyper-  
 bolical Description. He painted her as the *Nonpareil* of the whole  
*Tahiti*. She has (said he) a most exquisite Beauty, curious  
 Shape, quick Wit, and sweet Temper. Her Carriage is plea-  
 santly free, but never nauseously loose, keeping Boldness and Coy-  
 ness at a due Distance, so that the one may not cloy, nor the other  
 starve the Appetite. She is at all Times ready to oblige, and as  
 easy to be pleas'd. She is loving to Excess, and constant to a  
 Miracle. Her endearing Caresses shew all the Tokens of an  
 hearty Sincerity, without the least Mixture of a crafty Dissimula-  
 tion, and she is doatingly fond, but not subtilly fawning. She  
 deserves the *Indes*, but is content with Trifles, and desires to be  
 decent, but affects not to be gaudy. She utters her Farewel with  
 an excess of Sorrow; but salutes my Arrival with a transitory  
 Joy. She droops in my lamented Absence, under a languid Pen-  
 siveness, which finds no Intermission till my wish'd Return brings  
 the reviving Restorative. She as cheerfully as industriously studies  
 a Conformity with my present Humour; and therefore neither  
 by a lascivious Wantonness excites me against my Will; nor by  
 an icy Coldness damps the Warmth of my Inclinations. Force  
 made a Conquest over her Person, but not her Heart; and the  
 insulting Ravisher, who plunder'd her Innocence, was stab'd with  
 her Hate: He bore away the Booty of her Virginity, but left  
 the more valuable Trophies of her Affection to adorn my  
 Triumph. In short, the known Loss of her Virtue is the only  
 Stain she wears; but that Defect is supplied by her being Mistress  
 of every other commendable Quality the Sex can boast of. How-  
 ever

ever odious Scandal may make her in the Eyes of those Pretenders to Honour and Conscience, who are, in Reality, beholden to a right Constitution, ill Nature, or Pride for the Preservation of their Chastity, and value themselves for this single Grace, when they are destitute of all the Rest; as also of those, whose obscene Thoughts and secret Wishes are no less criminal than the Act itself, which their outward Hypocrisy conceals under the Covert of a formal Modesty, and demure Air; and likewise of the numberless Multitudes of private Sinners, who pass in the World for public Saints, only because their Caution, or Luck, has confin'd their Crimes to the Corner they were committed in, and so owe their undeserved Repute to them alone; yet is she worthy to be exempted from all those opprobrious Epithets, so justly applicable to notorious Strumpets. And tho' it may be allowed many Women can upbraid her Conduct and Fortune, in being so exposed; yet it is as true as severe, that there are but few who can condemn her, without the Repulse of a self Conviction in Will or Deed. I heartily condole the Uneasiness she has long undergone for my sake; for she has lived like a Recluse ever since my being here. Her Bed and her Closet have been the only Confidants of her mournful Lamentations; for tho' she lives in the opposite House, yet has not all my Vigilance been rewarded with the Glimpse of her."

I eagerly snatched at the Discovery, which at once informed me of what I so earnestly desired to know, and was likely to prove in a great Measure instrumental to the effecting my Designs; but it was yet too early to put them in Practice.

Coming one Morning into his Chamber, before he was sitting, he received me more respectfully than he had hitherto done, and I joyfully discerned an unusual Sedateness in his Mind. His Reason began to gain Ground, and his Understanding to recover its true Taste. Morality was now no longer nauseous, nor Advice insipid. He could hear with Patience, and answer with Prudence; *As the Brute wither'd, the Man flourish'd, and the Libertine gave way to the Christian.* He entertained new Sentiments of his Vanities. His Father's Frowns, and a future Vengeance had their proper Influence; by the one he believ'd the Calamities

Calamities of this Life, by the other the Miseries of the next. His *Maggy's* Allurements held him faster than all the rest of his Vices put together: The barb'd Temptation stuck in his Breast, and it required more Policy than Violence to disentangle him. The false Opinion he entertained of her was the greatest Bar to his Conversation: which, there was no Likelihood of removing, unless the Cheat could be laid open. I prevailed on him to make of her Sincerity; and he was the easier induced to it by an Assurance, the Experiment would redound to my Disadvantage, and invalidate my strongest Arguments: He forthwith arose, and, as agreed on, wrote the following Letter.

My Dear *Maggy*,

I think it very severe an excessive Love should meet with any Interruption: But a Father's Power over-rules a Choice, which should otherwise give you a Proof, that the most important Business should not keep me from you. The unwelcome Occasion will detain me a Fortnight longer; during which tedious space, I shall feel the Pains of your Impatience in my own Agonies. It will be the highest Happiness when my Tongue, instead of my Pen, can assure you that I am, Dearest,

Most faithfully Yours.

T. RICHBOTTOM.

The Billet was carefully conveyed to the Doxy, who not long after appeared at her Window, attired in a neat loose Morning-Dress, put on with an artful Negligence. A blue Damask Gown cover'd most Parts of her Body; but was purposely left so open before, that it neither hid her Breasts, nor a good Part of the fine lac'd Shift she had on. *Italy, Spain, and Portugal* contributed their Products to lend her a quotidian Face; and she as skillfully dispos'd her Colours in the framing a counterfeit Beauty, as a Painter could his on the Canvass, to bring a Lady to a good liking of her own Complexion. The Gaiety of her Mein shew'd not the least Symptom of a melancholy Mind. When she had wantonly look'd out a while, she thrust an End of one of the Curtains thro' the open Sash, which waved in the Street like a Flag.



*Flag on the Topmast of an Admiral.* It seemed indeed like an Accident; but the Consequence confirm'd it a *Signal*. Anxious Expectation made her restless, and for several Times she frisked backward and forward, like a Kitten after a Feather. — But at length a certain Animal came in View; who, no sooner spy'd the Token, than he flew to the Door, his rolling Eyes being busy on the Scout, to learn if he were taken Notice of. Being quickly admitted we observed their Meeting to consist of so many mutual Embraces and Kisses, as testify'd him neither a Stranger nor unwelcome. These ardent Caresses continued an unreasonable Time, till I was as much tired, as my Purse mortur'd at the Sight. They seated themselves close together; and *Ezekiel* the Foot-Boy, *Jane* and *Lucy* the Maid Servants, entered the Room with a familiar Obedience to receive their several Instructions. The Fop drew out a Purse from his Fob; but *Madam Magdalene* claiming a Right to the Disposal of its Contents snatched it from him; and gave what was sufficient to provide the intended Treat, reserving a Parcel in her Hand, which a few inveigling Smiles excus'd the Return of. Miss taking the Hint from some intelligible Leers nimbly skips from her Gallant, who a hastily pursues her to the subitular *Elysium*, where the Cloud of a Partition obstructed our farther View: But jealousy, and his own former Practice, enabled young *Richbottom* to give a very narrow Guess into all the Transactions of their Retirement, which lasted some Hours. About five the libidinous Pair returned from Love's Altars; but in such a Dishabillee, as made it no Difficulty to imagine what sort of Devotions they had been paying. The Golly with his Coat unbutton'd, his Stockings ungarter'd, and a Night-cap on his Head: The Punk with her Gown wrapt about her; which, opening by Chance, as she slept along, left nothing but a rumpled Smock to shroud her infectious Carcass. Her Patches were lost, her Varnish sullied, her Headclothes loose, and her Hair about her Ears; all which made her Figure more loathsome than tempting: In this Pickle they placed themselves at a Table spread with a luxurious Regale, wherewith they were to reimburse Nature her Expenses, whose Treasure had been exhausted by their late Prostitution. A mummy just past it instead of a Guest, and they fell to without any!

any other Ceremony than some wanton Gestures. Obscene Healths were alternately toasted; and, as they laugh'd, the Wenches sneer'd, and the Boy grin'd. — (Such Freedoms must be dispensed with: For an awful Reverence is not to be expected from sordid Minds; which, being privy to the Failures of their Superiors, set a Value upon themselves for their Secrecy.) Refreshed with their Viands, and flushed with their Wine, they wasted the Remainder of the Day in frolicsome Sports and wanton Dalliances, till the dusky Twilight, which favoured the Sparks going out, put a Finis to the filthy Farce.

How mortifying a Prospect this must be to young *Richbottom*, may be easily guessed by those who have been in the same Circumstances. I was not displeased with his Resentment, which I carefully improved with suitable Aggravations; and left him in such a Disposition of Mind, as allowed me some Hopes, the Occurrences of this Day would largely contribute to my Wishes: — But a few Hours gave an unexpected turn, and blasted my blooming Gladness; for, by the next Day, his Anger abated, and his partial Fancy so misguided his Judgment, that he rather excused than blamed her: The evident Conviction of her Falshood he accounted for by a favourable Interpretation; and tho' he could not give his Eyes the Lie, yet he blinded his Sense, and imposed upon his Reason by pleading in her Defence; urging, that her Yesterday's Digression might proceed from the Necessity of a former Correspondence, and the blinding Obligations annex to it, tho' contrary to a free Choice or real Inclination; and that her Compliance was constrained, and her Ardour counterfeited. His erroneous Notions infused a Faith in him, that the first Opportunity he had to tax her with her Inconstancy, she would confess the Truth, lament the Cause, and atone for the Crime with a Deluge of Tears. I reproved his credulous Folly, and pitied his Delusion, not doubting but a Succession of fresh Proofs would confirm the old.

As soon as he was up, we placed ourselves as we had done the Day before; and in less Time than would have tired the Patience of a longing Woman, we observed trusty *Exekiel* enter the House, who was immediately followed by a Couple of elderly Ladies, not despicably

despically mean in their Habit; but so particularly attired, that their Appearance was disagreeably remarkable. Sixteen and sixty were industriously blended together; but thro' a natural Antipathy, they would not be incorporated. Lean Cheeks and wrinkled Foreheads receive no Advantage from diminutive *French* Heads, which covering only the Crown, expose to View more Hair than Face. A Mask of white and red no more supplies the Want of Teeth, than a flaunting Breast-knot adorns the wither'd Skin of a tan-leather'd Neck. It is to be supposed, they rather consulted their Purfes than the Season, when the one had a velvet Scarf over a crimson Sattin Gown, and the other a cloth Cloak, and in the Height of Summer. *Lucy* introduced them to her Mistress, who received them with Extasy, and had Rapture in Return, which lasted till the Brandy-Bottle interrupted. After two or three hearty Glasses apiece, they began a clamorous Chat, followed by an obstreperous Laughter, so that they alarmed the Neighbourhood a good Way round. But *Nantx* getting Possession of their Noddles *Jam* helped the two Aunts into the Coach, and *Lucy* led her Mistress to her Chamber. Recovered a little by a Nap, she equipt herself, and went abroad, and we heard no more of her till past Twelve that Night, when the Street was all in an Uproar, occasion'd by a Coachman quarrelling with her Ladyship about his Fare; he lash'd her with Bear-garden, she maul'd him with Billingsgate; he would have out-cursed her, but she damn'd fastest. From Words they fell to Blows, he kick'd, she scratch'd, she threatened him with an Action and a Prison, he her with a Warrant and a ducking Stool; Dog, Bitch, Whore, and Rogue, were often exchanged between them; he storm'd, she ray'd, he stutter'd, she hiccup't; he spit in her Face, and she spewed in his; but the Watch came at last and parted the Fray.

For two Days she buried herself in Obscurity, but whether Shame or Indisposition kept her from appearing, I cannot determine. The third she came to Light again, when we saw her in the Afternoon steping into a Chair, compleatly set out in her best Array; we could not by any Means find what Intrigue was now in Hand, which put Mr. *Richbottom* in a melancholy Mood. The Spur is often as useful as the Crub; and Diversions are not



only sometimes allowable but necessary. The present Depression of his Spirits required a Revelation. I therefore proposed going with him to the Play, to which he consented with a dull Indifference. We got into the Pit the Beginning of the third Music; and, as we were taking a transient Survey of the Audience, we espy'd *Maggie* in the Stage Box deeply engaged with a Gentleman whose Garb bespoke him a *Man*, but his Countenance declared him an *Adonis*; a Compass of Contradictions, a martial Outside, and a feminine Soul. Her Familiarity betoken'd either an intimate Acquaintance, or a brazen Assurance, and she was too intent on her Affair to lend her Eyes a cast towards us. My rash Youngster would fain have confronted her, but I prevented him, and undiscover'd withdrew to another Seat, where we could see them with Ease, and yet not be easily seen ourselves. The several Passages during the Play were such as increased his Disgust, and fix'd his Resentment. We drove directly home, but heard no Tidings of our *Ephesian Matron* till ten the next Morning: when, being at the old Stand, we saw her come in: She ran up Stairs; her Maids after her, to whom, with wringing Hands, she told a most deplorable Tale: Her Headclothes were torn to Tatters; off she flung them in a Fury, and some of her Hair followed. Her Gown and Petticoat were in such a wretched Condition, that she looked as if she had been rolled in a Kennel and afterwards washed in Claret; and there was no Part of her Rigging but what had received some Damage. *Lucy* fawningly bewailed the Disaster: but *Jonny*, unable to curb an unlucky smile, kiss'd her Ladyship's Hand somewhat harder than she desired. Lamenting and scolding divided a Breath. She howled like a Widow before Company, and over-acted all the Parts of a frantic Passion: She made a Football of her Tea-Table, and trampled its Appurtenances to Atoms. She viewed herself in her Looking-Glass, and revengefully dashed it to Pieces for impartially representing her hideous Phiz.

Evils commonly go by Pairs; before her late Misfortune, and the Addition her own Folly had made to it were well over, and a little forgot she falls under another. Scarce had she shifted her Cloaths, and got the Room to Rights, when one, that Mr. Rich-

bottom

~~Letter~~ knew, came to the Door, and demanded a speedy Admittance by a thundering Knock. Fear jostled out Sorrow, and she dreaded nothing more than him who it really was. The Man you must know was by Nature a Mongrel, the illegitimate Spawn of an Esquire and a Kitchen Wench; who, as he came into the World by Chance, was maintained in it by Fortune, and being neglected in his Youth was good for nothing in his Manhood. Idleness had gained an absolute Dominion over him, and enervated his active Faculties. He esteemed himself as much above, as he was really unfit for Business; and tho' he scorned to work, yet he would not starve. His Person was very passable, bearing a good Face, and clean Limbs. From a truanting Scholar he became a Tavern-Drawer, where Affability and Neatness got the Encouragement, and his Vails purchased him Raiment. He was as compleat a Pimp as a Cellerman, and knew as well how to rank an Intrigue, as range a Vault: A rotten Carcase and stummed Wine were sorted together for his niggardly Customers; but sound Flesh and all neat were reserved for his best Benefactors. A Set of new Faces yielded him a new Suit, and he picked a Diamond-Ring out of a Maidenhead. He kept a List would vie Numbers with the Muster-Roll of a Regiment, and was as expert in the Knowledge of their Quarters, as a thoroughpaced Corporal. He took Tythe in Kind from his favourite Shes, but the rest paid their Poundage in Specie: When the tedious Time of his Apprenticeship was expir'd he wrote himself Man; and tho' he had not a Stock to make himself a Master, yet could he not submit to continue a Servant. He quitted his Trade to follow a Calling, and became a Broker upon Love's Exchange, where he had Commissions from Traders of all Degrees, and free Access wherever he came. He might be covered before a Garter, shake Hands with a Judge, take the Wall of a City Chain, and jostle a Common-Council-Man without any Offence. A young enter'd Bubble ador'd him, and a staunch Sportsman would embrace him; a Knight of the Shire paid him Respect, and a Country Gentleman did him Reverence. He kept the long Robe at a Distance, and had the Callock at his Back. Young Heirs, Apprentices, and married Men, paid double; one Moiety for Procuration, and the other

other for Secrecy. Every male Correspondent was his Banker, and he went snacks with the Women. The Multitude of Dribblets wisely manag'd would have grown to Wealth; but he had the Proverb on his Side; for his daily Expences declared him one of those who could not be accused of taking care for the Morrow; so that, notwithstanding his frequent Supplies, he remained as miserably indigent, as deservedly despicable. What he got from many he consumed on one: They lived upon each other by Turns; and being void of Forecast, they feasted one Day, and fasted another. Sometimes their Dresses rivalled Quality, another while they were levelled with the Black Guard. The Tallyman and Pawn-broker divided the best Part of their Substance: What they took up at 60*l.* *per Cent.* above common Price, they pledged at 30*l.* *per Cent.* Extortion to pay for. A good Booty procured a Redemption; but a small Stop put 'em under the Ticket. A lucky Hit prevented his Thought; but Necessity awakened his Invention. He was easy with his Clients in Plenty, but Poverty made the Rogue unmerciful. He had a great many of both Sexes in his Power, whose Imprudence had given him the Disposal of their Fates, and brought 'em under an Obligation of furnishing his Wants. A kept Mistress, that had proved unfaithful, tho' by his own Instigation, durst not deny his Demands. Amongst these he often took his Rounds, and would not return empty: The Failure of one made the next fare the worse. He would threaten a Discovery to frighten 'em into a Compliance, but was always wiser than to make it; foreseeing, that would not only spoil his Business, by bringing a Scandal on the Profession, but would also put the cast off Wenches out of a Capacity for the future; and therefore he chose rather to exercise his Authority on their Persons by a Bastinado, than run the Hazard of a double Detriment. He had the Impudence to ask high, but the Meanness to accept a Trifle; he would boldly insist on a Guinea, and as tacitly sneak off with a Shilling. One of these Extremities was, it seems, the Occasion of his present Visit to Maggy; who, knowing his Errand, would willingly have saved her Bones by Apologies and Promises; but his Affairs were too urgent to dispense with a Denial: He knew Mr. *Ribbottom's* bountiful Allowance



lowance yielded a good Fleece, and all her Arguments were too weak to bear down his. In fine, he made her feel, as well as hear his Resentment, and he left her Body in as much Pain as her Mind: She wore the Marks of his Tyranny all over her; and *the Effects of his Anger were visible in her Eyes.*

Her being really unfit to be seen kept her out of our Sight so long, that we gave over our constant Attendance, and diverted ourselves abroad some Days together; till coming home one Evening very dark, but not very late, we perceived a Couple before us striking up an amorous Bargain; but we could easier hear their Discourse, than discern their Persons. Mr. Ricbbottom whisper'd me, it was his Maggy's Voice, and persuaded me to accompany him in the Pursuit of this Adventure. We followed 'em at a proper Distance to an Hedge-Tavern, and had the Fortune to be shewn into a Room next 'em. I gave him the Liberty of making the best Improvment he could of this Accident; and Convenience usual in such Places let him into the Sight of a lewder Scene than he had ever been Actor in. Her Mate was the Beau's Footman I not long ago mentioned; and the Rewards of her Favour to him were only his Promises of preserving his Master's Esteem for her, and using his good Offices to continue the Correspondence. He could not learn from her Manner of Behaviour, that she made any Distinction between a Livery and Embroidery, but that she expressed as much Love to the Lacquey, as she did to the Master; and was as obliging in an eleemosinary Embrace, as in the Enjoyment of himself, on whom was her chief Dependance. He found, that this Meeting had been before agreed on, and heard 'em make another Appointment.

This last Confirmation gave the finishing Stroke to his Conviction, and turn'd his passionate Love into a downright Loathing. He witnessed the beastly Action with an unmoved Temper, and sedately testified a settled Hate. Her Ingratitude and Baseness conspired to establish his Aversion, and Memory assisted to complete it, by bringing to his View many past Passages; and, tho' they had carried suspicious Symptoms, yet her cajoling Art had hood-wink'd his Senses, and stifled his Jealousy in Embryo. How probable soever her Lapses appeared by the Evidence of corroborating

ible Circumstances, the Want of full Proof was her double Ad-  
 vantage, in giving her Cunning an Opportunity to justify her  
 pretended Innocence, and upbraid his tim'rous Surmises. Upon  
 the first Intimation of his Doubts she would craftily fathom the  
 Depth of his Penetration, and with insinuating Stratagems learn,  
 whether he built his Accusations upon the firm Foundation of a  
 positive Assurance, or only the sandy Bottom of chimerical Con-  
 jectures, labouring under the Pain of Anxiety, till his uneasy  
 Tongue had declared his Thoughts without Reserve. When she  
 joyfully found the Extent of his Mistrust to fall short of the Truth,  
 and not reach the Fact, she rouses her Rage, puts on a haughty  
 Air, and covers her Guilt by triumphing over his Weakness.  
 Anon the unfortunate Creature weeps most bitterly, as if her  
 Grief were inconsolable; but if her Policy exceed not her Sorrow,  
 she might easily pass by the Injury with dry Eyes. His most  
 exact Entreaties, patient Persuasions, and submissive Acknow-  
 ledgments, join'd with reiterated Promises of a generous Confidence  
 in her for the future, avail not toward a Reconciliation, till his  
 Ear or a Present sue out a Pardon, which quickly reduces the  
 good natur'd Thing to her wonted Kindness, and turns her from  
 a Tyrant to a Sycophant. These, and other Reflections, together  
 with what himself had beheld in this Fortnight's Probation,  
 wrought a perfect Cure on him. He was now sensible, that all  
 her seeming Kindness was mere Hypocrisy, and that she had no  
 more Honour than Virtue, nor Affection than Grace. Her Dis-  
 guises became transparent, and he could read the Deformities of  
 her filthy Soul thro' the deceitful Veil, and perceive the Treachery  
 of her Heart, tho' shrouded with bewitching Looks. Her Insults  
 have lost their Terror, and her Allurements their Charms; he can  
 smile at the one, and despise the other. In a Word, he look'd  
 upon her as a Compound of Lust and Perfidy, whose Caresses  
 were artful, and *Transport to Trade*, and his Cheeks were the  
 Badges of a relenting Shame for being so long imposed upon by  
 one all over Counterfeit, and whose Mind was no more real than  
 her Face.

I design'd to let a few Days pass before I would mention his  
 Return to his Father, that I might observe if he continued in the  
 same

same remorseful Frame of Mind, and to give him such Advice, as might confirm his Penitence: But his own eager Desires outran my Intentions; for with all the Tokens of an hearty Contrition he entreated me to intercede with his justly provoked Parents to forgive his past and hated Faults, and that he would hope for their Favour upon no other Terms than the Merits of his future Obedience; and, that he might have no Occasion to trust himself in her inticing Company, after he had quitted my Protection, he concluded it proper first to get what should be thought convenient out of the House, as the Plate, Jewels, and some Part the Furniture, and dispose of them as I should direct, designing to leave her some Necessaries for her Use; for tho' she deserved not any Thing from his Hands; yet, for his own Reputation, he would not quite strip her. To set the better Face on this Contrivance, he proposed to give a Judgment, under Pretence of Debt, to any one I should chuse. I approved of the Method, and we went immediately to a fit Person, as faithful as able to perform it. The Instrument was soon prepar'd, sign'd, seal'd, and deliver'd, and as speedily enter'd up, and was to be executed the next Day at an appointed hour. It was agreed he should be there before-hand, he being willing to hear what a forged Account she would give of herself, and the Excuses she would make for her late Transactions, and prevent the concealing of any Thing that was to be taken away. All the Particulars relating to the Affair were punctually managed, and a lasting Separation followed: But I must not omit the Dialogue which pass'd between them, it being very material to the only Aim I have.

I must inform you, that, when the Time limitted in his Letter before mentioned was expired, we perceived a new Turn in the House, every one in it was prepared for his coming, all Things were put in exact Order, and the Servants busy in the several Stations. Expectation appeared in their Looks, and *Madam* set out herself in the attractive Air of a languishing Countenance, and elegant Dress. A little more white than usual, suited her Face to the Part she was to act. *Mr. Richbottom*, armed against her Wiles, took a Turn, and went to her with a Deceit equal to her own, and after the dissembling Raptures of both were over, she accosted him as follows.

D

Maggy.



*Magg.* "If I should tell you how overjoyed I am to see you it would be more than you deserve, who tho' you know what a Torment your Absence is, could stay so long from me. I have fretted and fasted myself to nothing. Those that are ignorant of the Matter, tell me, I am going into a Consumption. I have been a Stranger to a comfortable Minute, or a Night's Sleep, since I saw you. I'm so alter'd, I don't look like the same Person I was.—I cannot bear this Life.—Neither Father nor Business ought to make you neglect me, but you are glad of any Pretence: 'Tis an unfortunate Thing to love so ungrateful a Man to the Excess that I do; yet you won't believe me, if you did, you would not serve me thus. You often say kind Things indeed, but your Actions don't agree with your Words. You are sensible soft Expressions please me, and therefore vent them for your own sake, that I may be in an Humour to pleasure you in every Thing: But when you are gone, you hardly think of me, till your Fancy prompts you to come again. I sometimes imagine what you say is real, but you give me so many Occasions to believe the contrary, that I as often call myself Fool for my Credulity. You cannot think what I suffered till I heard from you. A thousand Fears possessed me.—One while I was apprehensive you were Sick, and thought it very hard I could not see you. Alas! (said I to myself) he has no Body at home to nurse him with that Care and Tenderness I would. Then the many Accidents that happen, made me fearful another while, that you were dead; but I resolv'd to follow you as soon as I should hear it. Then the Inconstancy of you Men gave me a Conceit you had chosen a new Favourite, and I underwent all the racking Tortures of Jealousy. These and many more Distractions were my only Companions. I told you at first what an uneasy Creature I should be when once I set my Heart on you, and sure you might have found some Way or other to have shortened my Pain. Had you not one Hour to spare? No Contrivance in you! Had I been in your Place, I would have invented some Way or other to have regained your Quier. No Necessity you can urge is sufficient to excuse you. You are not a Boy, tho' you are content to be made one. I wonder when you intend to take the Privilege of your Years, and free yourself from your Father's Fetters. Sure it

it is reasonable now you should be Master of your own Time and Fortune, and not cringe for every Penny, and ask Leave for an Holiday? But your Sheepishness, forsooth, has not the Courage to encounter that imaginary Giant, called Duty. When you are to go abroad with him, you should tell him you are engaged to meet Company, and must not disappoint them. If he orders you Business, you must excuse yourself from doing it, by pretending greater of your own. If he would have you stay at home, be sure to go abroad. Grumble at his short Allowance; and, if he refuses to add to it, get to his Cash, and be your own Carver. He is but a Tenant for Life, and it is but making use of your own a little sooner than foolish Custom allows. Was you pin'd in your Chair? or tied with a Thread to the Bed-post, that you could neither come nor send for above a Week together? But why do I ask that Question? the very Letter itself shews it was your want of Will. — Only two or three Lines — short and sweet. — You thought you must say something, but did not care how little. It displeased me almost as much as it satisfied me, and, tho' it drove away my first Perplexities, it gave me new Disturbances. — I wish I knew what you have been doing all this while, it may be pursuing Matrimony, and courting that delightful *Blowzabella* your wife Father has pointed out for you; if so, tell me, that I may wean myself from you before that unhappy Day; for I resolve to have no more to say to you, when it comes to that. You persuade me, he has left you to your own Choice; if she be the Person, take her. — I acknowledge my own Folly in entertaining other Thoughts."

Her ready Tears knew their Cue, and stopp'd her Tongue to utter their own prevailing Eloquence: But the Language of either so little affected him now, that he had much ado to cover his Composure with a Mask of Concern. His Eyes were no less intent than his Ears, and he observed all the sideward fleeing Glances that attended her colloquing Periods. He was not very forward in replying, neither did she grant him any more Time than while she could dab up the few Drops she had let fall, and pocket her Snivel, before she thus began again.

*Magg.* "Sure, I'm the most unhappy Wretch that breathes; I have not only been tormented for want of you, but have had an

hundred other Vexations at home. You know what a small Pittance you left me, but I might live on the Air for you: I have been plagu'd with Tax-Books, and twenty small Duns, which I could not pay, but I hope you intend to discharge them now, and not let me be teaz'd in this Manner. I am contented with what no Body would, and yet you grudge me mere Necessaries. You think every Thing too much for me, and yet pretend to love me. I dare not tell you what has happen'd, because your mistrustful Head is apt to make wrong Constructions of Mischances. Poor *Lucy* is out of her Wits, and won't come in your Sight. The heedless Thing cleaning the dining-Room, left open the Sash, and the Wind being very high, blew down my Picture that hung over the Tea-Table, and has broke every Thing that was upon it to Pieces: G-d knows, I rally'd her soundly for it in my Passion: — But 'tis over now. She offered to pay for her Folly; but I think that too hard. She has cry'd herself sick: be good natur'd for once, and say nothing of it — *Tommy*, the Squirrel has gnawed both the Toes of my best Shoes, so that I can't dress me till I get another Pair; but take your own Time, I an't in haste. I'd never wear my Cloaths, if it were not your Desire I should. You say you love to see me fine, and that makes me put them on sometime: But truly mine have seen their best Days, and are known every where. I begin to be out of Love with them: But if you'll give me another Suit, those shall be new dy'd and made up, and they'll serve well enough for common Dressing. You promised me such a Brocade as my Lady *M* — has: I like it because you do, and expect you should be as good as your Word, to make me amends for all that I have endor'd for you. Nay, *Brutus*, don't smile; that sha'n't do Mun; — or are you plotting to send it me unawares, as you did the Silver Tankard in a Basket of Walnuts: — well, do if you will, 'tis very pleasant to be agreeably surpriz'd. But I have more ill News to tell you, rummaging my Closet, I set the Bandbox, wherein was my new Mechlin Head upon a Chair, and that plaguy Devil *Cupid* muzzled open the Lid, got it out, and in an Instant tore it to Bits: I paid the Rogue heartily, and, had he not been your Darling, I'd have hang'd him for't. Another Day hearing some Body knock at the Door, I thought it had been you, and, running in Haste from



from my dressing Table, the Sleeve of my Gown catch'd hold of the Looking-glass, flung it down, and broke it. All these unlucky Mishaps made me mad, not so much for the Damage, as the Apprehension my ill-boding Mind fram'd of the prophetic Omens. New Fears about you were ever before me; but now that I see you well, I am satisfied, if I'm to be the Object of their evil Portents. I can meet the worst Fate with Pleasure, if you are exempted. Why does my dear Soul shake his Head, and look as if he gave no Credit to what I said?

*Richbottom.* "Dear *Maggy*, you confound me; your present apparent Sincerity so contradicts the Information I have had of you, that I know not what to think. The Relation struck me with Amazement, and it exceeds my Belief, that so much Vileness should be gilded with so becoming a Sweetness. I came with a Resolution to upbraid you, and take my final Leave: But your artless Behaviour so clearly demonstrates your Innocence, that it would be the highest Injustice not to believe you. I was told, that soon after you received my Letter, a Gentleman was seen to come to you, and stay'd here all Day, which gave Grounds for Malice to suspect the worst, and that Account was aggravated with spiteful Comments, but your candid Declaration will set me right, and confirm me in the Notion I have already entertain'd of some underhand Dealing betwixt us."

*Maggy.* "This is some Body that ill-natur'd Fellow your Father has employ'd to make a Difference between us; an Engine of his. If you are to be catch'd by that Trick, farewell all my future Joy, and welcome the worst of Misery. You'll be perpetually alarm'd in this Manner, if you don't put a Stop to't at once. But I foresee your natural Jealousy, which you pretend proceeds from the Violence of your Affection, will one Day be impos'd on to my undeserved Ruin. If your Love was real, you would never have such mean Thoughts of me, as to imagine, that I could counterfeit my Passion towards you, or prove false to the only Man on Earth I doat on. I shan't deny the Truth--there was a Gentleman here, and one whom, were it not for your sake, I could be very happy with. He dearly lov'd me many Years ago, and would fain have married me, but I cou'd not like him. He went out of England to cure the Wounds of my Disdain, and is  
but

but just returned. He found me out, and came to see me; and, he has heard the Misfortunes that have befallen me, continues in the same Mind still. Yet could have had no Reason to apprehend any harm from him, if you had been here; and you do him a great deal of Injury to doubt his Honesty: He has a truer Value for me; but I desired him to desist from any such Design, and he promised me he would never more attempt it; and resolves to be gone again in a little Time. Must I be branded for this? You are cruel to accuse me; I have no other Fault, than that of loving you too well: You may blame me for it indeed; but I never expect you'll be convinced, till you find the fatal Effect of your Unkindness, and then it will be too late for me to reap the Joys of your Acknowledgment."

*Richbottom.* "Nay, now you distract me: I both believe, and forgive you; but I must blame one Miscarriage, and am heartily vex'd, you made me and yourself so public, by coming home at Midnight disguised in Drink, and so clamourously contending with a saucy Coachman: Your Indiscretion is in every one's Mouth; and ill Nature is not wanting to augment it with ridiculous Circumstances."

*Maggie.* "Ay! I would you had been here, if you had not suck the Dog, I'd never have seen your Face again. You must know, that, in the Morning, my two Widow Aunts were here: I gave 'em a Dram or two, and they would force me to drink a Cup with 'em. My weak head was overturned with it; and after a little Sleep, maudlin as I was, I went to Mrs. Sewillbitch, our trusty Hostess. The honest Man and good Woman were heartily glad to see me, and bid me welcome with a little Sneaker of Punch, and a Hot-Pot: We drank your Health, and talk'd of you till it was late: Then took Coach home, and the Fellow, who was more sensible of my failing, than I was myself, took the Advantage, and offered to be rude; but I resisted the Rascal; and he, in Revenge, exacted upon me more than was his Fare; and that with what had pass'd before so provoked me, that being a little elevated, I lost the Use of my Reason, and am sorry upon your Account for what happened; but Deary, I'll do so no more."

*Richbottom.* "There was nothing in this but what may be allowed of, tho' it was otherwise represented to me: But as to  
your

your being at the other Night at a Tavern with a Footman, how will you excuse that? Deny I'm sure you cannot!"

Maggie. "L—d! you're a strange Man. Well! I'll tell you all, if you'll give me Leave:—But you have no Patience.—I never saw any body of your Temper in my Life.—D'ye think there was any harm in meeting a Relation? He is a-a-a Half-Brother of mine; I never intended you should have known any thing of him, because he wears a Livery. But 'tis his own Fault, he might have done better if he would. My Father provided very well for him; but his own Folly and good Nature have reduced him to what he is. He serves a Country Gentleman, and does the Business of a Steward there. He is in very great Favour with his Master, and will quickly be in a better Station: He came to Town last Week, and sent me a Letter. He wanted to see me, but would not come to my House for fear of disgracing me: I took his Modesty very kindly, and appointed to meet him that Night, as I thought, unknown to any Body; but I find I am mistaken: Perhaps, I may never see him again, so that need not trouble you. Have you done now: I promise you I'll never do any thing to disoblige you: Let me have your Company, I desire no ones else; I'll do all I can to please you. Come, my dearest Life, lets forget all that's past, and be more Friends than ever. This Kiss and you know what shall cancel all Animosities, and renew our lasting Loves."

My young Man was put to his Neck Verse, when my Friend and R——'s, at the Head of a Crew of Mirmidons, came to his Assistance, seiz'd him, and ransacked the House. They gave him Leave to detect the Falsity of her evasive Account, whereby she was sensible he knew the whole Truth of her Proceedings; and then hurried him away leaving her in a Confusion not easy to be apprehended, and much harder to be described.

I lodg'd the Moveables in safe Hands, discharged the several Agents, and regained my Convert. My next Day's Business was to carry the happy Tidings to the desponding Parents, whose hovering Doubts opposed their ready Belief: But my solemn Affirmation of the welcome Truth, in a while, met with Credit, and revived their drooping Hopes. I requested an Interview, and



and an indulgent Reception; both were promised. His first Approaches were attended with profound Submission; prostrating himself at their Feet, he most pressinglly implored their gracious Pardon. His penitential Flood was seconded by a Shower, their Joy had gather'd. Their compassionate Hearts directed their Hands at once to raise him from the humble Floor, and bless him with an affectionate Embrace, which gave him an Earnest of their exceeding Forgiveness. The Sight was as delightfully pleasant, as movingly tragical. The Son abjured his Crimes, and the Parents buried 'em in Oblivion. In a Word, his after Life made amends for his former, and turn'd their direful Misfortune into a real Comfort. His Duty was his Delight, and to please his Parents his greatest Pleasure. He conform'd himself wholly to their Wills, and cheerfully submitted to their Directions. His filial Obedience was rewarded with a fatherly Benediction; and he reaped the double Felicity of their Joy, and his own Tranquillity. He marry'd, not only with their Consent, but by their Appointment; and experienced, that the Promises of a kind Father were inviolably sacred. His Wife transcended in Virtue, and abounded with Love: *She became a fruitful Vine upon the Walls of his House, and his Children like flourishing Olive Branches surrounded his glad Father's Table.* He proved as good an Husband, as he was a Son, and nothing was wanting to compleat a Family's Happiness.

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